

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
HUNTING SEASON / QUOTA CHANGE SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Species: Elk
Region: 2
Hunting District: 214
Year: 2018

- 1. Describe the proposed season / quotas changes and provide a summary of prior history (i.e., prior history of permits, season types, etc.).**

Change the area valid for Elk B-license 002-00 from private lands district-wide to “only valid west of Storm Lake Road and Storm Lake Trail.” This change would go into effect immediately upon Commission approval in order to prevent the possible overlap of rifle hunters and bowhunters on private lands that are leased for open recreation by Anaconda-Deer Lodge County.

Region 2 recommended, and the Commission approved the use of the regional Elk B License (002-00) in multiple hunting districts for the 2018-2019 hunting seasons, including HD 214, south of Anaconda. FWP’s recommendation for including HD 214 was to address chronic elk damage, which occurs in the western part of the district, south of Philipsburg. However, it was an accidental oversight on the part of Region 2 to include private lands across all of HD 214, which includes winter range adjacent to the Garrity Mountain WMA. Overharvest of elk that are not causing game damage could occur in the eastern portion of HD 214 on a large block of private land administered for public recreation by Anaconda-Deer Lodge County, and on any number of neighboring private lands with access circumstances that could result in excessive antlerless harvest.

This was brought to FWP’s attention by the Anaconda Sportsmen’s Club, and the Club and the County stand ready to assist with outreach and signage to inform the public of this change, if enacted.

- 2. What is the objective of this proposed change? This could be a specific harvest amount or resulting population level or number of game damage complaints, etc.**

The objective of this change is to correct a mistake in the prescription of the 002-00 Elk B license:

- To protect a vulnerable segment of the elk population from overharvest
- To direct available hunting pressure to the correct portion of HD 214.

- 3. How will the success of this proposal be measured? This could be annual game or harvest surveys, game damage complaints, etc.**

Success would be measured by:

- Public awareness and compliance with this change.

- 4. What is the current population’s status in relation to the management objectives? (i.e., state management objectives from management plan if applicable; provide current and prior years of population survey, harvest, or other pertinent information).**

Region 2 counted 234 elk in 2018, which is below the objective of 450 elk in HD 214. This was a comparatively conservative count because elk were in the timber, although it illustrates the order of magnitude of elk occurrence in this district.

5. Provide information related to any weather/habitat factors, public or private land use or resident and nonresident hunting opportunity that have relevance to this change (i.e., habitat security, hunter access, vegetation surveys, weather index, snow conditions, and temperature / precipitation information).

This proposed change that would make the 002-00 B License valid only west of Storm Lake Road and Storm Lake Trail takes into account some unique matters of land use and public use of private lands in the area immediately south and east of Anaconda, where elk would be vulnerable to early and late harvest.

6. Briefly describe the contacts you have made with individual sportsmen or landowners, public groups or organizations regarding this proposal and indicate their comments (both pro and con).

This proposal is FWP's response to issues raised by the Anaconda Sportsmen's Club and is offered with the support of Anaconda-Deer Lodge County as well.

Submitted by: Mike Thompson

Date: July 2, 2018

Approved: _____
Regional Supervisor / Date

Disapproved / Modified by: _____
Name / Date

Reason for Modification: